SPOUSES' COURSE:

PROFESSIONALISM

ENHANCING HUMAN CAPITAL

Col Jeffrey A. Smith, PhD.

PROFESSIONALISM?

The art of leading oneself…

- A commitment to specific institutional standards
- A personal degree of loyalty to shared objectives
- A shared trust between members of the organization

Professionalism is based on a foundation of Commitment, Loyalty and Trust to a specific set of institutional standards and expectations

PROFESSIONALISM

That's not my job.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT…?

- What is it?

  - It is the deliberate effort of infusing "professionalism" into the development process (Commitment, Loyalty, Trust)

  - In action, it is the process of combining one's understanding of personal values and standards with the often complex challenges of everyday life

"It must be baked into everything we do!"

WHO BUILDS THIS BRIDGE?

TAKING THE FIRST STEP…

We must start by providing leaders with better tools and more of them

These tools must be provided across the Air Force culture through a combination of education and experience

- This starts with providing a better understanding of the human phenomenon
- A better understanding of the human phenomenon requires tough habits of thought

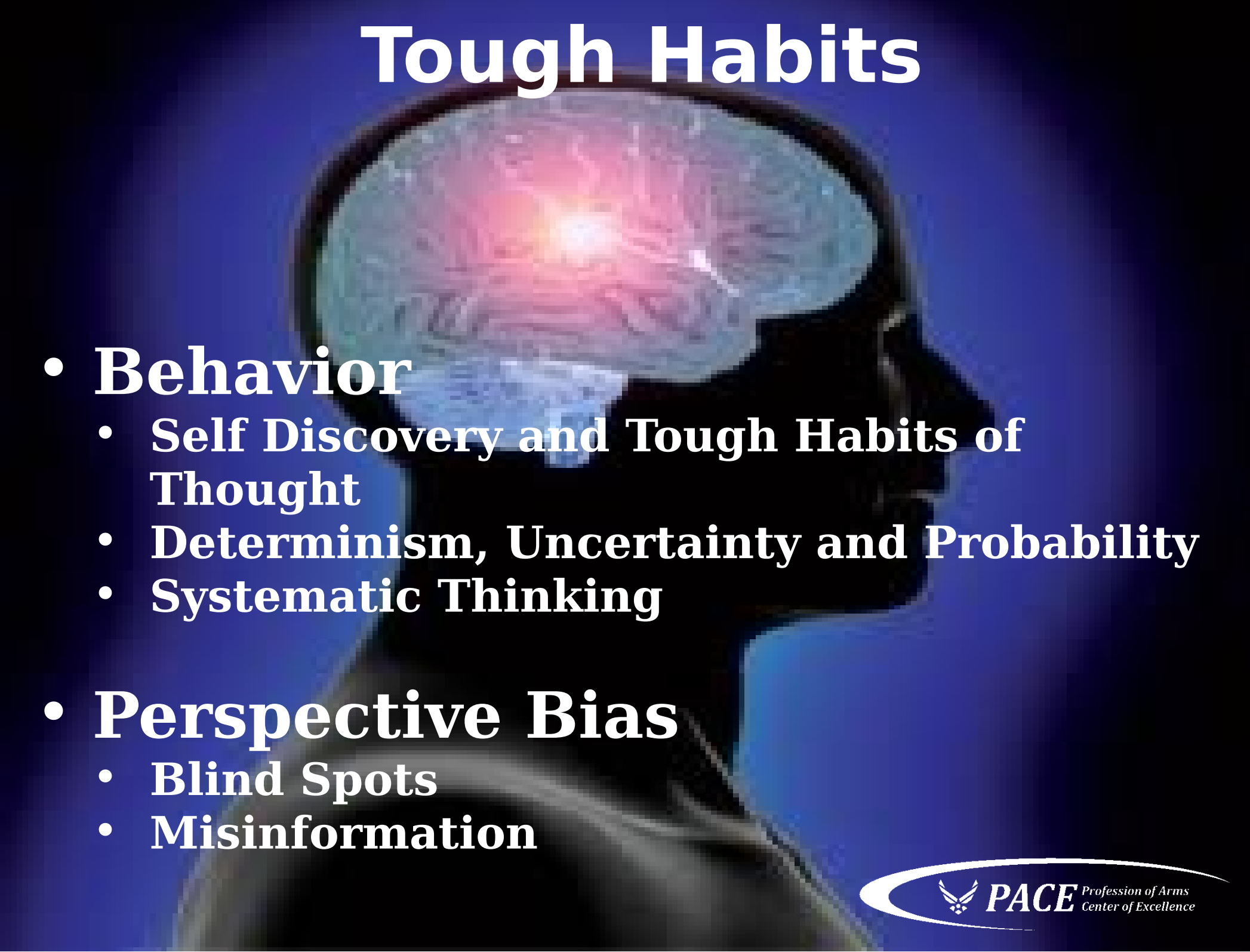
BIAS AND PERSPECTIVE

PROFESSIONALISM

The art of leading oneself…

Professionalism: The Art of Leading Oneself
Video

Tough Habits



- **Behavior**
  - Self Discovery and Tough Habits of Thought
  - Determinism, Uncertainty and Probability
  - Systematic Thinking
- **Perspective Bias**
  - Blind Spots
  - Misinformation

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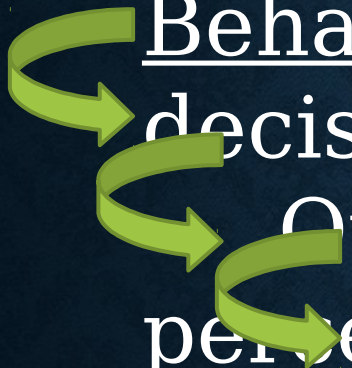
HUMAN BEHAVIOR…

We can trust that people will do what they perceive is in their best interest to do

IN-GROUP BEHAVIORAL PSYCHOLOGY

- People want to be part of something bigger than themselves
- Research suggests that humans seek and join groups in order to build identity and belonging
- In order to maintain group membership, individuals must choose on their own to modify their behavior to the group's standards and expectations
- This "choice" is based on perceptions normally centered on trust, loyalty, and a shared commitment toward the group
- Leaders have the ability to influence those

Behavior driven by Perceptions



Behavior starts first in the brain as a decision

Our decisions are based on our perceptions

Our perceptions are continually being shaped

This "shaping" can be influenced by others

If we want to affect behavior, we must influence

THE HUMAN PHENOMENON

- Everyone has a brain…
- Everyone has personal experiences…
- Everyone has their own perspective…
- Everyone has a unique way of thinking…

The development of perspective is uniquely shaped over a lifetime…

TOUGH HABITS OF THOUGHT….

Finding the occasional straw of truth awash in a great ocean of confusion and bamboozle requires intelligence, vigilance, dedication, and courage. But if we don't practice these tough habits of thought, we cannot hope to solve the truly serious problems that face us…and we risk becoming a nation of suckers up for grabs by the next charlatan that comes along.

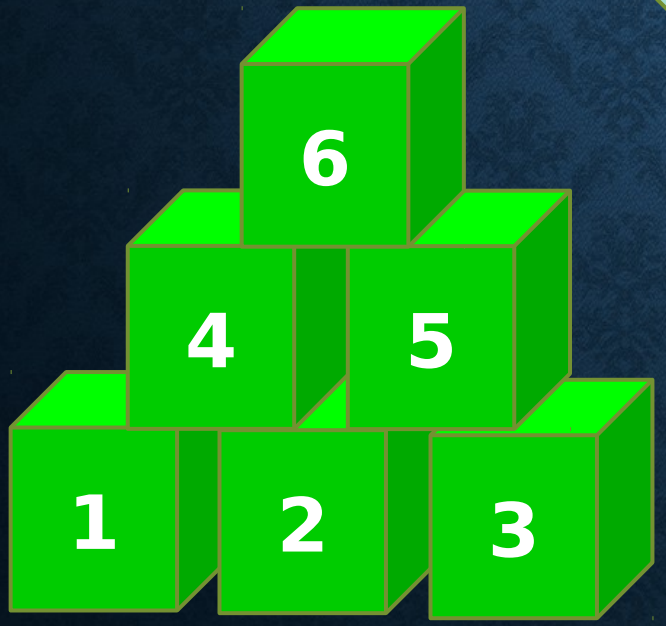
Carl

BRIDGING THE THINKING PARADOX

Probability

Determinism

Uncertainty



SYSTEMATIC THINKING

A thoughtful, systematic process can lead folks to a common and coordinated end-state regardless of how difficult the puzzle may seem…

However, sometimes, our systematic approach to decision making, even in what appears to be a simple process, does not lead to a common solution set…

PERSONAL BIAS AND BLIND SPOTS…

The single most destructive roadblock in our becoming an effective leader is our own personal bias…

…personal bias often results in “blind spots”

Motion Induced Blindness
Video

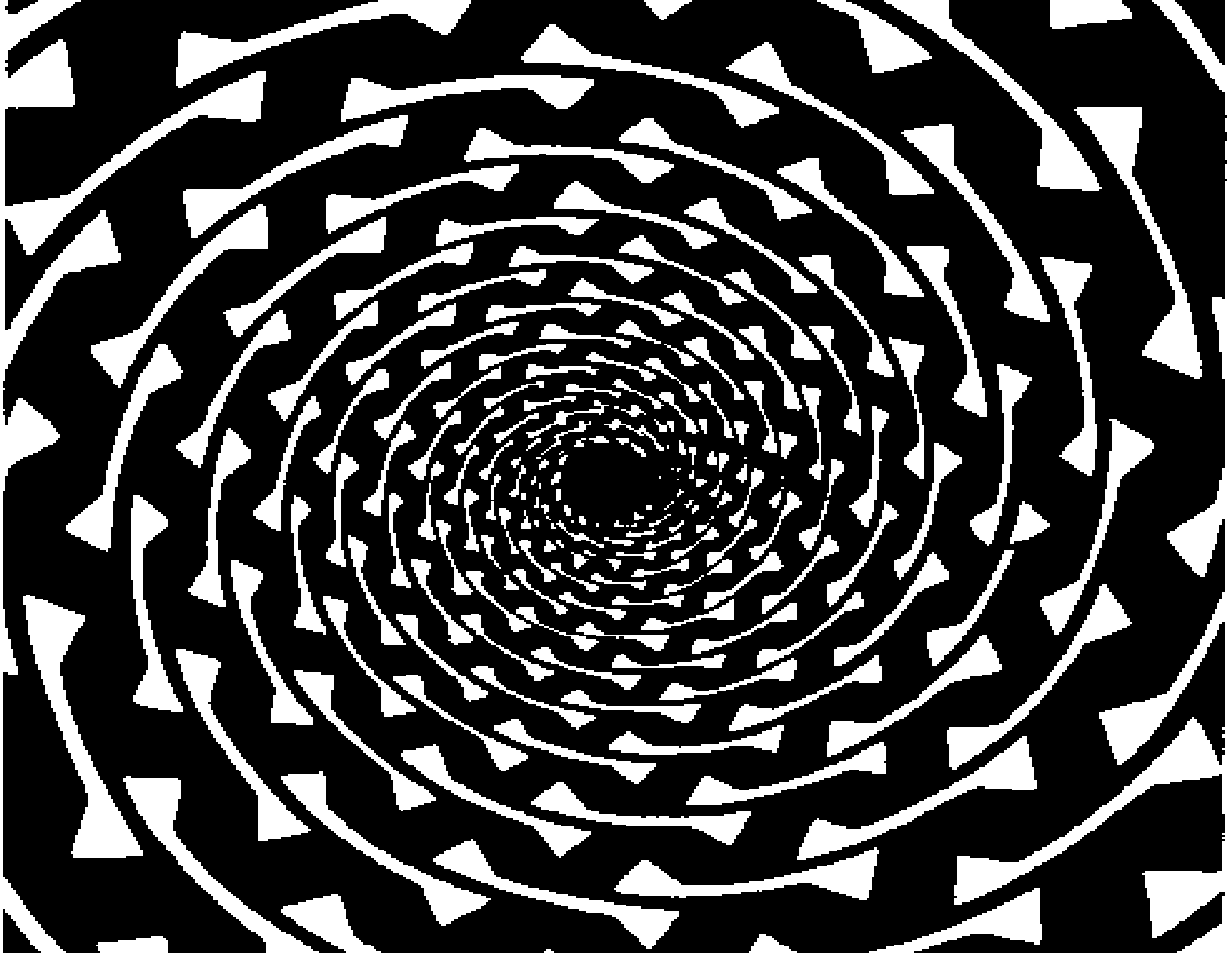
Often, blind spots result from our brain trying to cope with excessive "noise"

- Family conflict
- Career pressures
- Overtasked
- Personal drama
- Budget

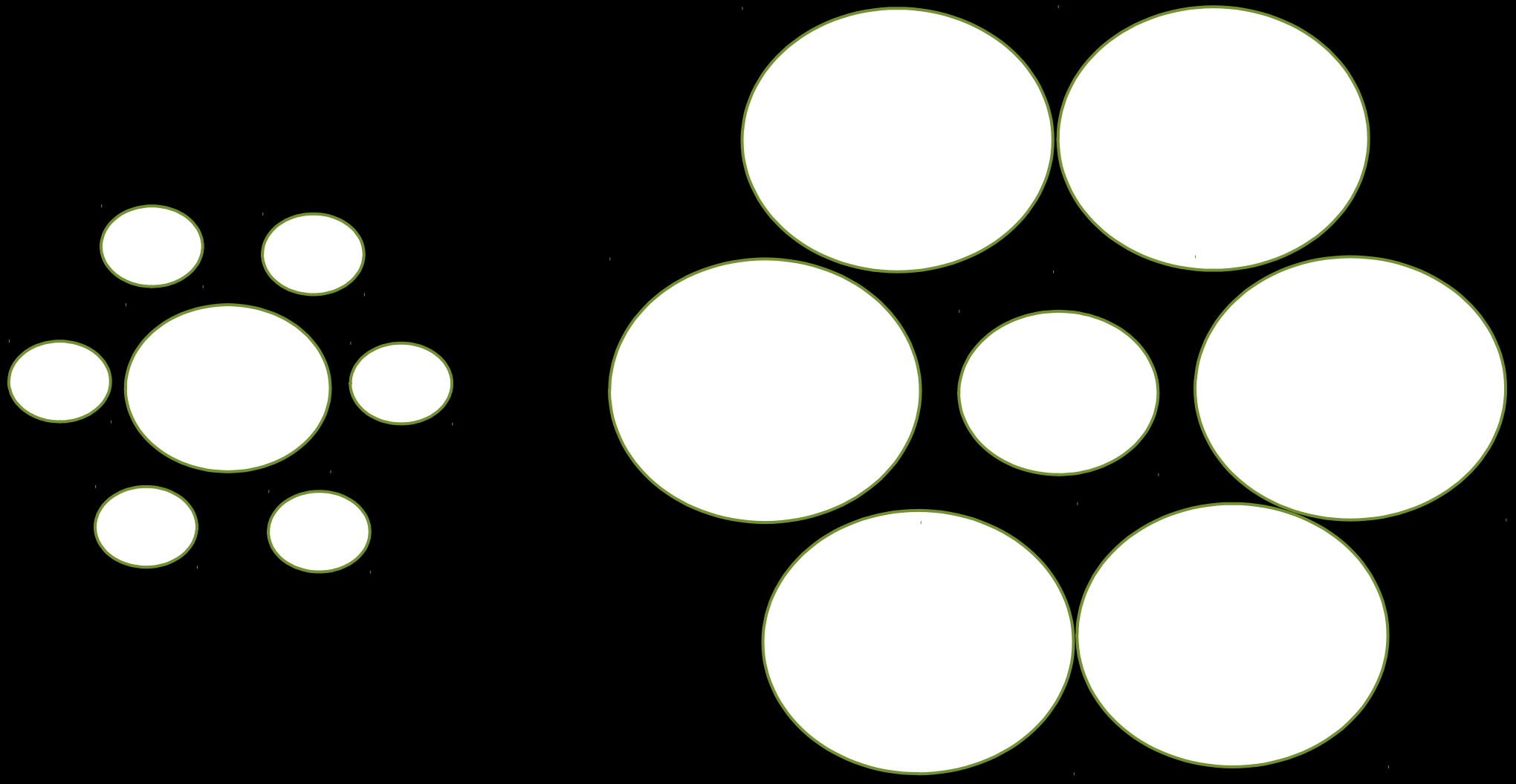
What are some of the consequences of personal bias and blind spots?

- Mental Entrenchment
- Egocentric perspectives
- Ethnocentric prejudice
- Closed Mindedness
- Poor relationships
- Conceit

MISPERCEPTIONS



HOW MIGHT THE CHALLENGE OF PERSONAL BIAS AFFECT OUR RELATIONSHIPS?



DEALING WITH PERSONAL BIAS…

- Rarely expect or seek absolutes
- Ponder more, talk less…
- Ask yourself, “What am I missing?”
- Try assuming you are wrong
- Always seek alternatives… from others
- Turn off some of the noise…

Communication

- **Miscommunication**
  - **Gestalt Theory and “how” we communicate**
  - **Mental Entrenchment and Capability Gaps**
- **Communication**
  - **Destructive or Effective?**
  - **Productive Dialogue**

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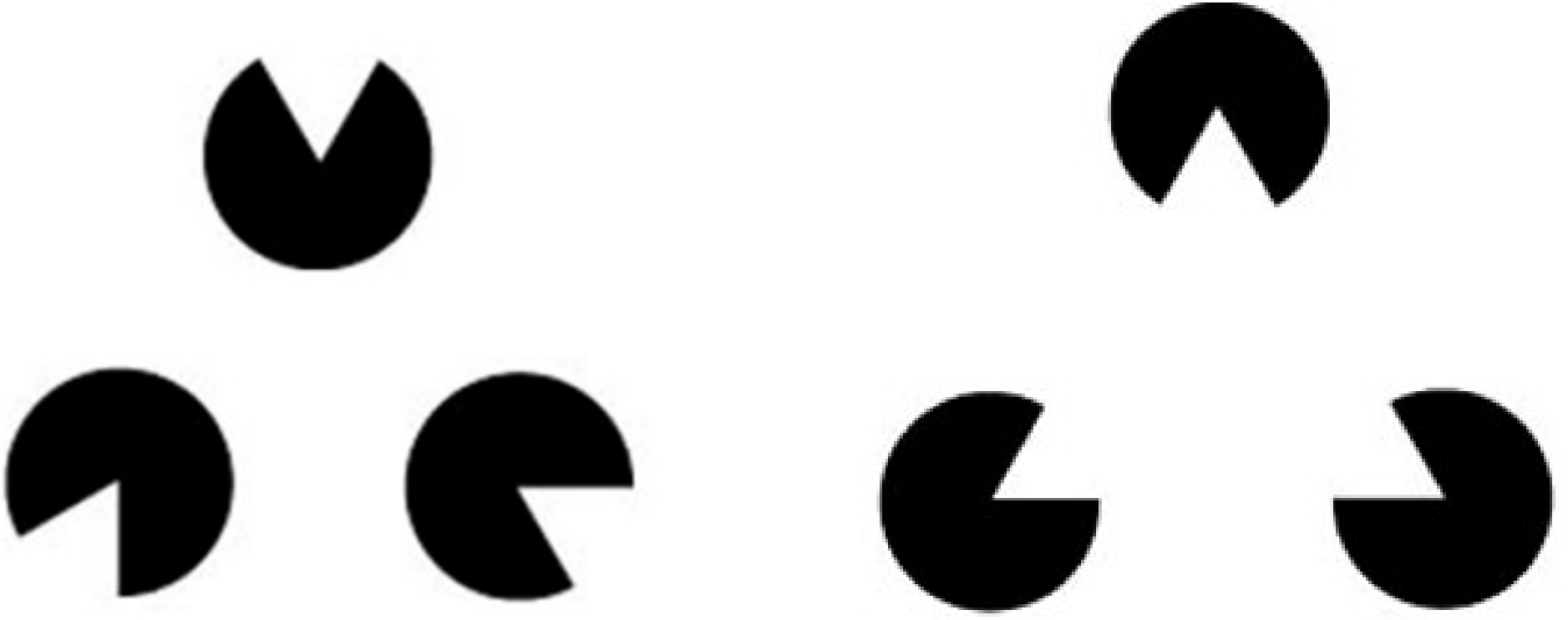
Miscommunication

German Coast Guard
Video

HOW WE COMMUNICATE MATTERS…

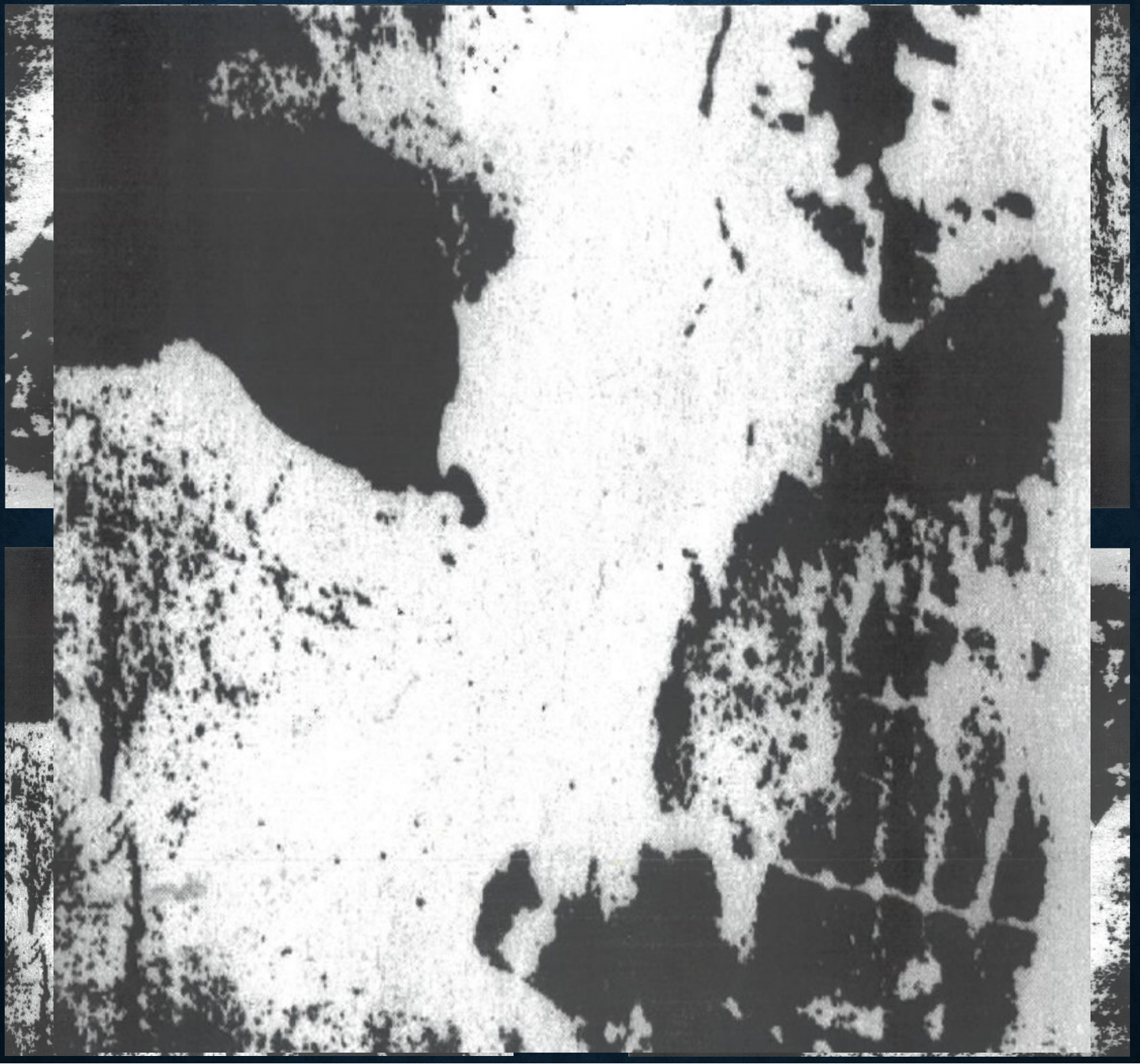
- Sometimes just changing how information is presented can have a significant impact
  - Random items test
- We must be willing and able to tailor our communication
- How we communicate information to others can affect how the message is received and understood (Intellectual synthesis)



MENTAL ENTRENCHMENT

- Once our brain draws a conclusion, it is very difficult to “see” it from a different point of view

This “Mental Entrenchment” can be very damaging to effective communication



Effective Communication...

Relationships

Finances

Vacation

Kids

School

Careers

Responsibilities

Extended Family

Interaction:
- **Discussion**
- **Argument**
- **Dialogue**
- **Dia**

MISPERCEPTIONS AFFECT COMMUNICATION

- What we hear is not always what was said
- How we communicate makes a difference
- Miscommunication is a big problem
- The “Bubble Syndrome”
- The “Vulnerability Fallacy”

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS ARE SKILLED LISTENERS

Be genuinely interested in what other people have to say

When someone is giving their input, do not be sidetracked by the mental development of your next comment…

The technique and psychology of paraphrasing back!

A. Weston and Carnegie

COMMUNICATING OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES…

Are there systematic considerations for communicating our directives to subordinates?
(Star)

1. Acknowledge that not everyone will be on board at the same speed
2. Align to a common perspective
3. Build on a common reference point
4. Provide clear, path-specific directions
5. Be Patient

CONSIDERATIONS FOR BETTER COMMUNICATION

- The only way to get the best of an angry argument is to avoid it
- Do not be ill tempered or mean spirited in your debate
- Be very careful telling someone they are “Wrong”
- If you are wrong, admit it quickly and emphatically
- Try honestly to see things from the other person’s point of view
- Appropriately hold others accountable for their perspectives

D. Carnegie

Tools, Ideas, and Discussion

- **Developing the Environment**
  - **Turning This Into Action**
  - **Some Ideas…**
  - **Web Page**
  - **Every Day Counts…**

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TURNING THIS INTO ACTION

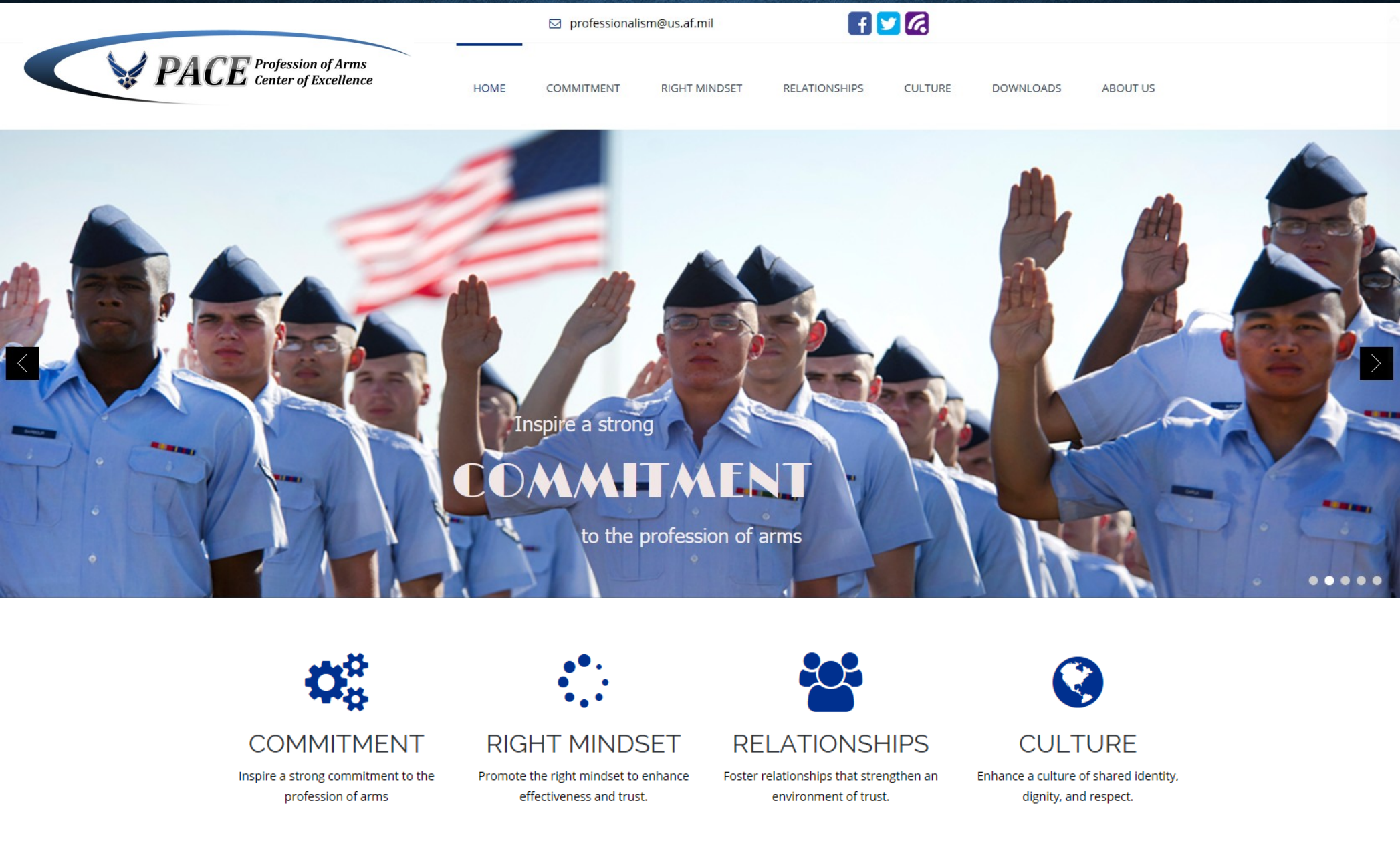
- Young adults may require different leadership than older adults…take their demographic into account
- Once you have a plan for something new, go for it! Do not wait for a mandate or an official Air Force program or down-day…
- Empower your folks with this information…get others on board with your vision for enhancing human capital
- Be patient, have a long-view perspective (Trust, Loyalty, Commitment)

SOME IDEAS…

- **Walk With Me**
- **Think Tanks**
- **Activity Planning**
- **Book Building**
- **Servant Heart**
- **Three Slides**
- **Tough Times Talk**
- **Notes**
- **Base Paper**
- **RHIP**

Professionalism is centrally expected but locally owned!

http://www.airman.af.mil



USAF Professionalism

@ProfessionalAmn

https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/usaf-professionalism

BOTTOM LINE…

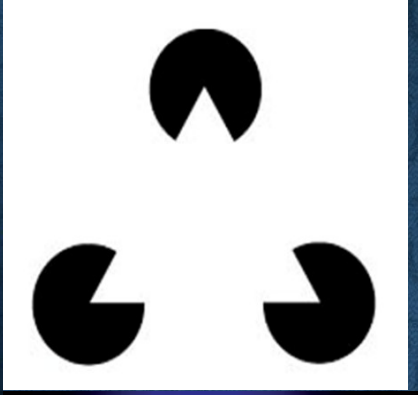
As leaders, our #1 job is to bring out the best version of our people intellectually, physically, and emotionally…

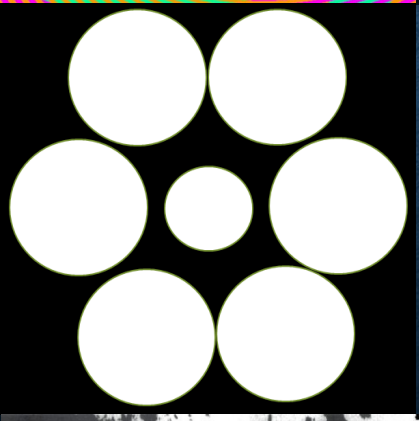
…this is, and will remain, the single most important requirement for healthy relationships

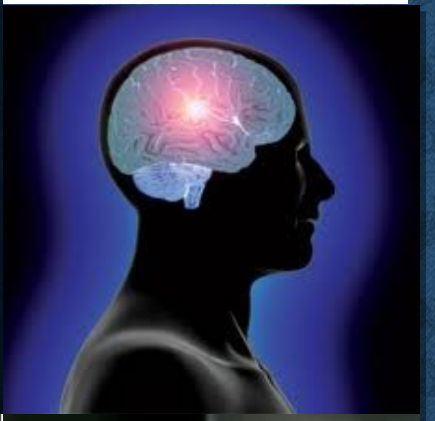
LEADING PEOPLE

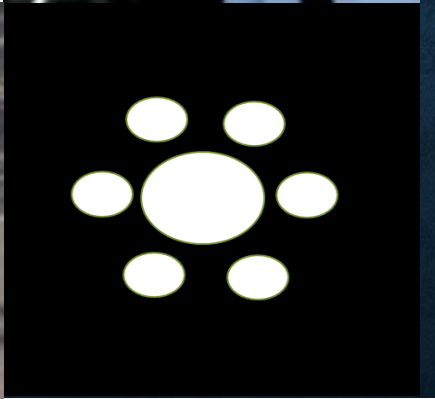
Every Day Counts…

The Time You Have Left (In JellyBeans)
Video









QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

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